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April 25th Take Our Daughters to Work Day

Thursday, April 25th, is Take Our Daughters to Work Day. This national event is sponsored locally by the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee For Women (ICCW). The ICCW has sponsored the day long event for three years now and hopes to see the greatest participation ever this year.

The Take Our Daughters to Work effort is aimed at lowering dropout rates, improving self esteem, and promoting training and educational opportunities for teenage women in a variety of occupations. Girls who participate can receive scholarships and have a wonderful day of learning.

In our society today, young girls are vulnerable and at risk. Discrimination, sexual harassment and teenage pregnancy rates produce alarming statistics. Did you know that 40 percent of all teenage women will become pregnant once before the age of 20 and that 80 percent of working women are still clustered in only 20 percent of the United States Department of Labor's classified jobs.

ICCW, along with help from state agencies hopes to make a difference for the young girls in our community. Freshman and sophomore girls can enroll in the program through ICCW. For these girls, it is considered a school activity and transportation from school is available.

You can also invite your own children to join you in the office for this day.

If you are interested in bringing your child to work on April 25th, you first must contact the school and arrange for an "excused" absence and then advise your supervisor that your child will be at work with you. You also must provide transportation and assume responsibility for your child during the work day.

If you have questions about Take Our Daughters To Work, please contact Lou Moore at 6749 or Jane Bernard at 4066.

You're Invited

You and your children and girls enrolled in Take Our Daughters to Work are invited to an opening ceremony with Governor Racicot and other speakers in the Old Supreme Court Chambers at the Capitol, 8:45am, April 25th.

Customer Commentary

On March 12, Don from Pennsylvania called Enid in Customer Service asking for the State Fund address. He concluded his call by commenting, "you people are so nice and helpful, can your guys come and work for one of the Workers' Comp companies in Pennsylvania?"

Curt L. of the Montana Motor Carriers Association called to share that a policyholder spoke very highly of the State Fund during a recent meeting. Curt said the testimonial made MMCA members really take note and have a positive attitude.

Jim S., an out-of-state business-man working in Montana, called the CSU recently asking questions about his policy. At the end of the conversation Jim said that of all the states he had dealt with he found Chantel VanDaele, Becky Rabey, and Sandy Poor very friendly, knowledgeable, and extremely helpful and that he appreciated doing business with the State Fund.

Mark your calendar

April 22	Earth Day
April 24	All Employee Meeting, 10a
April 24	Secretaries Day
April 25	Take Our Daughters to Work
April 26	Dept. Rep. Meeting, 10a
May 3	Board Meeting, 8:30a

New Underwriting VP Onboard

Our new Underwriting Vice President, Michael Glass, comes to us from Salem, Oregon. He brings extensive experience, not only in the underwriting field, but specifically in the workers' compensation insurance area.

He began his career over a decade ago as a claim adjuster,

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The Trainer Knocks! Opportunities for Personal and Professional Development

I was walking by a cubicle the other day when I heard a telephone handset being rather forcefully set down. This was accompanied by an "expletive deleted !" comment.

Been there? Done that? The phone was down before the customer heard. But did you ever stop to think of the potential impact your comment might have on those around you?

Have you ever been offended by a careless remark of your colleagues? Have you ever made a disparaging remark about a coworker without thinking? How is your language? Is swearing a part of your everyday conversation?

When was the last time you heard a dirty joke? Was it at work? Was it told where others could hear? Did someone in the crowd (maybe you) chuckle or smile politely while cringing on the inside?

Have you heard strongly held views on provocative subjects expressed around the office? Did you take offense? Did others around you? Or did you later hear those remarks passed on to someone else in a conspiratorial or collusive way?

Have you ever heard or been party to rumors or gossip about coworkers in the workforce? Or policyholders? Or claimants? Or even the shopkeeper down the mall?

We all like to think of ourselves as "professionals." And, Heaven knows, we've all been part of creating an atmosphere of "professionalism" in the workplace. But before we can really call ourselves professionals, we have to gain control over our communication style.

English is a wonderfully rich language. We have so many different ways we can express a single idea. Swearing or using foul or suggestive language in the workplace is a poor substitute for using your imagination to come up with one of those wonderful expressions our language is so full of.

So, if your first instinct is utter a foul word, take the extra few seconds to think before speaking. Marshal your thoughts and take advantage of the vast

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Human Resources

Personnel changes as of April 19, 1996.

New Hires

Michael Glass, Underwriting
Lauree Kramer, Underwriting
Connie Brooks, MIS

Departures

Larry Wiedey, Underwriting
Chris Hauge, MIS

FRU Is Important Voice

First Reporting Technicians are in contact with our customers every day and are an important voice for the State Fund.

Most of their day is spent on the telephone taking calls from injured workers or employers who have a claim to file or injury to report. They interview the customer to get all of the necessary accident/injury information, enter the information into the computer, and follow-up with any unanswered questions.

After the claim is established, they code the information to provide statistics that create Loss Run information for policyholders. MIRA uses the coded information to set reserves on claims and the Department of Labor collects the data for NCCI purposes and other various research.

The unit of 9 technicians also investigates and processes all claim-related documents and mail that come to the State Fund without a claim number.

The FRU staff recognizes the value of immediate reporting and promotes these advantages to employers and employees every day.

Without this team, we could not brag about our recent decline in the number of days to report an injury. This month we saw our lowest rate yet, an average of 15.6 days for employer's report from date of injury. Way to go FRU!

Kudos Kolumn

Kudos to Ann Clark
—helping policyholders understand the issues!

A policyholder stood up at recent meeting of the Montana Motor Carriers Association and praised Ann Clark for helping him understand the independent contractor issue. Curt L. and all members of the MMCA thank Ann for taking the time to explain the issues.

Kudos to Juanita Hicklin
—organized and researched 1,000s of bills!

The data entry crew—Cathy F., Kathy T., Marie, Rita, Deena, and Harry—would like to extend Kudos to Juanita for organizing and researching thousands of bills to help them get caught up. They said they couldn't have done it without her.

Kudos to Sandy Adams, Donna Liedle, Terry Loftsgaarden, Sharon Williams, and Rae Jerrel
—helping get caught up!

Kris Brandt extends Kudos to Sandy, Donna, Terry, and Sharon for researching bills to get Data Entry caught up, and to Rae and Sandy for working overtime.

More Kudos to Juanita Hicklin and the Data Entry Staff
—working hard!

Kris Brandt would also like to extend Kudos to Juanita, Deena, Marie, Harry, LaVonne, Kathy, and Cathy for working so hard to get caught up and to Marie, Harry, Cathy, Rita, Kathy, and Juanita for putting in extra hours.

Profiles

First Reporting Unit

Wendy Blood has been in her current position at the State Fund for 2 years.

Wendy's special duties include the research of medical bills and new adjuster/employee training. She also has had the opportunity to provide on-site policyholder training on completing and filing First Reports.

Prior to coming to the State Fund Wendy worked as a procurement tech for the Department of Defense in Alaska and Washington and as a legal secretary in Montana and Arizona. She also has 3 years toward a BA in Business Administration.

Wendy has been married to her highschool sweetheart, Lou, for 10 years. He is an abuse counselor at the Intermountain Home and they have 2 boys; Louie (5) and Payton (3). Wendy enjoys cooking and baking and loves to try new recipes. She also enjoys sewing, playing the piano, gardening, and camping.

Pam Brown has been a First Reporting Tech for 3 months, but has been with the State Fund for nearly 8 years.

The majority of her years worked at State Fund have been as an administrative clerk for the field unit, field supervisor, and investigators.

Mary Green has been with the State Fund for over 17 years. Her special duties include processing paper claims and stats batching claims that go to policy services.

Prior to coming to the Fund, Mary worked as a respiratory tech at St. Peters Hospital here in Helena and at Queens Medical Center in Honolulu, Hawaii. She was also a ward secretary at St. Peters and a claims process at Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

Mary has completed medical receptionist training at the MTI Business College in California and respiratory tech training at St. Peters Hospital.

She has 2 sons, 1 daughter, and 6 grandchildren and likes to collect dolls.

Myrna Hammond has worked as a FRU tech for 8 months. She has been with the State Fund since January of 1979 and has held the positions of executive support, receptionist, word processor, and accident cataloging technician.

Myrna is a Helena native and graduate of Helena High. She has been married to Lee for 18 years and enjoys camping hunting, outdoor activities, cooking, kids, and life!

Nance Hughes is the supervisor for the First Reporting Unit and has held the position for 6 years. And last fall Nance was named the supervisor for the Customer Service Unit as well.

Prior to coming to the State Fund Nance was the respite home health coordinator for WestMont Home Health for 5 years. She also worked at the Helena Orthopedic Clinic, St. Peters Hospital, Helena, and St. Mary's Community Hospital in Walla Walla, WA.

Nance received her LPN from College Place in Walla Walla, a medical/legal secretary endorsement from the Bozeman Vo-Tech, and medical assistant training in Walla Walla. She also has 3 years of nursing courses

Nance's hobbies include collecting antiques, crafting, and laughter.

Helen Osterloth has been with the State Fund for 17years. Her special duties as an FRU tech include assigning claim numbers to new claims, and processing paper claims and unnumbered mail.

Helen has worked as an office clerk typing accident cards here at State Fund and she also worked for Blue Cross and Blue Shield.

Helen has been very happily married to Bill for 34 1/2. She has 4 daughters, 1 son, and 9 grandchildren.

She loves to bowl, sew, and spend time with her family and grandchildren.

Mitzie Saltzman has worked at the State Fund for about 5 1/2 years, 4 as a First Reporting Tech.

Her special duties include assigning claim numbers to mailed and faxed claims and ensuring the claim number is on all First Reports.

Mitzie started at the State Fund as a microfilm clerk then moved to Accident Cataloging. She also worked for Consultec and part time at Gibson's.

She is a graduate of Capital High and received certificates in word processing and medical secretary from Helena Vo-Tech.

Mitzie has been married to Steve for 3 1/2 years and they have no children, yet. They have a dog named Bernie and she lists her hobbies as riding horses, exercising, walking, and camping.

Karen Kay Wegner has been a FRU tech with the State Fund for 5 years. She takes claims over the phone, sets up paper claims, and numbers unnumbered mail.

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Profiles continued

Before her position as FRU tech Karen worked as a data processor and held a position in accounting.

Karen is a graduate of Helena High. She attended MSU-Bozeman for 2 years and graduated from Watterston College in Oxnard, CA.

She has one big gray cat named Apache and belongs to Cat Lovers and a number of other animal groups. Karen is also a collector and has over 500 dolls. She is a Trekkie and belongs to 2 Star Trek fan clubs.

Lila Walker has been with the State Fund off and on since 1992. She has been a FRU tech for 8 months and says her "job is a lot of fun!" She also says the policyholders really like it when she tells them they can save money by reporting promptly.

Lila first worked for State Fund as a temporary microfile clerk under the supervision of Fred Lubke who she says "is a great boss."

Lila has 2 teenagers, Michelle (16) and Gerad (12). She also has a teenage roommate, Katherine. She says life is a joy; between working and teenagers, her life is very full.

Holly Wood is the lead First Reporting Tech and has held the position for almost 2 years.

Holly helps with training and maintains scheduling for the unit. She also provides on-site injury reporting training to policyholders.

Holly worked as a FRU tech for 1 year before her promotion to lead tech. She also worked in policy services as an administrative assistant and as a file clerk. Prior to working at the State Fund, Holly worked as a receptionist for the Helena Veterinary Clinic, the Department of Family Services, the Department of Labor and Industry, and she says the list goes on.

She has attended business and computer classes at the Helena Vo-Tech, continuing education in workers' compensation law, and attended Hawaiian Pacific University for 1 year.

Holly is married to Russell and they have 2 children, Aaron (5) and Courtney (2). She enjoys crafts, fishing, camping, skiing, boating, swimming, gardening, and cooking.

Proofread Beyond Your Computer

Even if you have software that checks spelling and grammar, your computer won't catch every mistake. Here are some tips to help you catch errors your computer could miss:

- Look at the layout. Are all headings and subheadings consistent throughout? Have you formatted paragraphs consistently—indent, no indent? Do the page numbers appear in the same place on each page—and are they in order?
- Double-check for accuracy. Have you spelled proper names correctly with their true titles? Is your word spacing off? Are quotation marks missing? *Also*: If you're sending a letter, is the address the same on both the letter and the envelope?
- Inspect all figures—including dates. Have you transposed any numbers? Are totals correct and decimal points aligned? Do dates given match the correct days of the week.
- Search for language-usage problems. Do nouns and verbs agree? Do you see any dangling participles? Did you use the passive voice too often?

Source: Leonard B. Kurk, cited in *The Take-Charge Assistant*, 135 W. 50th St., New York, NY 10020.

Are You Ready for Spring?

Yes, it's that time of year again, when we can finally pull off the layers of wool and synchilla (well hopefully soon) and head outdoors for some fun.

Here is a list of some upcoming sporting events...

April 21 Ice Breaker, a 1, 3, and 5 mile run/walk, Great Falls
April 28 Peaks to Prairie, a run, bike, and canoe/kayak race, Billings
May 5 10th Anniversary of Bloomsday, 7 mile run through the streets of Spokane
May 12 Race for the Cure, 1 and 3 mile runs, Helena
May 18-19 TOSRV, a 230 mile bike Tour of the Swan River Valley,
June 1 Governors Cup, 5k, 10k, 20k, marathon, and marathon relay, Helena

For complete event and registration information call the Chamber of Commerce in the city of the event.

Announcing Another New Arrival

Susan Moore, Premium Audit, gave birth to a bouncing baby boy on Wednesday, April 3rd. He weighed in at 8+ lbs. and his name is Kalen Christopher. Kalen joins sisters Jessica (7) and Mindy (12).

Congratulations Susan and Brian Moore!

Movie Review

Myhre and Visser give it two thumbs up!"

The State Fund's newest release, filmed on-site at the Lewis and Clark County Court House, will be available for public viewing across Montana this summer. This public service commercial attracted some big names and discussed the important fight against workers' compensation fraud.

A convicted felon, played by Wes Winden, attempts to defend his main activity as a ski bum while on workers' compensation benefits.

Leading lady, Lois Vick (not to be confused with Lois Lane) makes her movie debut playing the superb role of prosecuting attorney.

A jury of bright, aspiring actors and actresses unanimously decide the claimant is guilty as charged.

The film ends when Judge Frank Graham slams his gavel and rules in favor of the State Fund.

In an unforgettable performance Carl "Rhett Butler" Swanson, provides narration in his smooth southern drawl. In an assuring way, he convinces Montana citizens that the State Fund truly means business in its fight against Fraud.

All in all, this is a not to be missed blockbuster hit, coming soon to a TV near you.

Production credit goes to KUSM at Montana State University who kindly donated much of the production time and cost to create this fabulous film.

Special thanks to all the cast; Harold Danielson, Debbie Flansaas, Frank Graham, Myrna Hammond, Denise Molley, Toni Sperle, Debbie Svaldi, Carl Swanson, Shawna Swanz, Lois Vick, Bill Visser, Ray Williams, and Wes Winden.

Training continued from page 2

array of really nifty words you could select to express your idea.

Rumor and innuendo contribute to nothing but unease, unhappiness, and poor work habits in the office environment. Be a stopper—not a perpetuator.

And, while we all have the absolute right to our personal opinions on a whole range of controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects, most of them have no place expressed in the business environment. Most of them don't have anything to do with the way we should be doing our business anyway.

Language is truly a big part of our professional image.

Don't clam up over all of this!!! Just think before you speak and clean it up—if it's you.

. . . Frank

Training Opportunities

Insurance Institute of America (IIA)
See me about programs and details! We'll have a flyer out soon with all the available programs. These programs range from general awareness of the professional insurance environment to certification in many different insurance disciplines.

State Professional Development Center
SIGNS: *Detecting Substance Abuse on the Job*, April 23
Delicate Balance: *Privacy & the Right to Know*, April 24
Self Management, April 30
Essentials of Management, starts May 7 (seven days scattered thru mid-June)
Planning and Organizing, May 9
Coaching Performance Appraisal Interviews, May 22
Introduction to Type (Myers-Briggs), June 12
Communication for Teamwork, June 13
Contemporary Writing Skills, June 13 & 14
Working With Difficult People, June 25 (half day)
Effective Communications Skills, June 25 (half day)
On Becoming Assertive, June 26 (half day)

Helena College of Technology
(State contract computer training)
Intro to Windows, May 3; Jun 3 or 4
WP6.1, Apr 25-26; May 16-17
WordPerfect Tables, April 23
WordPerfect Merge & Sort, April 24
Lotus, May 22-23
Oracle, June 3-5
Oracle Forms, May 28-30 and June 10-12
Oracle Reports, June 25-27
Lotus Approach, April 22 or 20; May 7; June 13

The Computer School
(am=9-noon; pm=1:30-4:30;eve=5-7pm)
WP6.1 Beginning, Apr 23-25, 30 (eve)
May/June schedule will be out next week. Check with me if you have a need.

ICCW Discusses 2nd Self Defense Class

by Denise Molley, State Fund representative

At the March meeting of the Interdepartmental Coordinating Committee for Women, ICCW, we discussed the idea of conducting another self defense class in May.

The cost of the class would be $65 and limited to around 12 people. Discounts and agency support is typically available for those interested.

The results of the Day Care/Benefits survey are being tabulated and should be available in the next month or two.

ICCW will sponsor a presentation at the Capitol for Women's History Month in April and Take your Daughters to Work is well underway. (see cover story)

Message from the Editor

With only a few days left at my computer, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank all of you who have made my time with the State Fund very enjoyable. Its not often that people get a forum like this to say thanks, but for me, the Guardian is a way that many of you have come to know me.

One of the greatest assets about this organization are its people! This building is full of wonderful teachers, friends, and caring individuals who deal with amazing challenges every day. The virtues of patience, commitment (Hey I even spelled it right Marvin!) and hard work will stay with me wherever I venture.

For those of you whom I have had a particularly close opportunity to work with, I greatly appreciate you taking the time to challenge, teach and enrich my life. Good luck to all of you!

In the words of Franklin Roosevelt, "Happiness lies in the job of achievement and the thrill of creative effort". Like Dorothy, I'm off to see the wizard and find that whimsical and wacky adventure!

State Fund Eagles Fall In First Game

Sunday, April 14th, those amazing *Eagles* pulled on their green shirts, tied up the soccer cleats and played their first game of the season.

Unfortunately, they lost 4 to 0 to a tough Carroll team and suffered a couple of injuries. The season is early though and the team will be playing through the spring and summer.

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Letters to the Editor will be accepted from current State Fund employees and are to be submitted to the Editor no later than the last Monday of each month. The employee's name, section and department, and phone number must accompany the letter. Letters deemed inappropriate to the goals and objectives of the *Guardian* or the State Fund will be returned to the author with an explanation of denial.

Letters to the Editor do not reflect the policy or official positions of either the Board of Directors or the management of the State Fund.

Editor, Aidan Myhre, Director, Industry and Consumer Affairs. Managing Editor and Layout, Shawna Swanz, Public Information Specialist. Call 444-5982 with comments or suggested articles for the *Guardian*.

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New VP continued

entered the underwriting field, and has held various positions during his career.

In his most recent position, Michael was Branch/Regional Manager with Agri-Comp. Prior to that, he was with the SAIF Corporation (Oregon State Fund) based in Portland.

Michael's ten plus years of responsibility in the underwriting arena include marketing, risk management, premium audit and, product development.

Michael's hobbies include long distance running and Shakespearian plays.

Employee of the Month

Congratulations Delores Hill, Employee of the month for march

The Claim Department went through a major physical change about 6 months ago when each unit was set up into "pods" that placed 3 adjusters and 1 claim assistant in pretty close quarters. The need for cooperation and collaboration was very necessary, if the team approach was to succeed.

Delores' efforts definitely enhanced her unit's cohesiveness. Her quiet strength and persistence in working well with everyone enabled the unit to really come together and succeed.

Everyone in her unit comments that whenever you need to be sure something will get done, and done well, you can always rely on Delores.

External customers that call the unit are greeted by a very courteous, knowledgeable response. If Delores cannot answer a question, she is sure to get the message to the appropriate party in a prompt manner.

Delores is also involved in the Soroptimists, a professional womens' organization that raises money for scholarships and other worthy causes throughout the community. She was one of the main people that worked on raising funds to repair the Firetower, get a fence around it and have it lit for the Christmas holiday.

Delores' efforts have not only resulted in rewards for those that work with her at the State Fund, but for the entire Helena Community.

Delores and her husband "Chap" have 2 grown children and 4 grandchildren. She enjoys cooking—especially baking. She once owned a catering business in Lewistown and she and her partner "catered" a three day rodeo in Harlowton (with a bit of help). She also was society and women's editor of the Lewistown News Argus for five years.

Following her retirement at the end of April, Delores and her husband plan to do a bit of traveling and she may pursue some free lance writing.